

❖ Shifting Weight Toward the Hemiplegic Side in Standing

This is not intended for low-level patients. Your patient must be alert, have some dynamic trunk and lower extremity control.

Starting Position

1. First, follow the guidelines for *How to Safely Stand a Patient*.
2. Stand next to the patient on their weak side and a half step behind.
3. Place your hands firmly on the patient's hips.
4. Make contact with the front of your hip against the back of their weak side. **Do not pull the patient toward you** as this can throw them off balance. Move your hip forward from your own stable base of support.
5. Widen your base of support for tall, large patients.

Handling

To help your patient to initiate a weight shift toward the weak side:

1. Maintain contact with your patient at the pelvis, hips, and trunk.
2. Begin at midline and **slowly** shift toward the weak side until the patient has nearly full weight on the weak lower extremity.
3. As the patient shifts their weight toward the weak side and away from the non-involved side, you might feel less co-contraction of the muscles around the hip of the non-involved side. You may notice even a slight drop or "letting go" of the pelvis.
4. Do not go too fast or too far. This could set off a balance reaction and be frightening to the patient.
5. Allow your patient to bear weight on the weak side for a moment or two.
6. Return to midline.



Tips

While your patients are standing, monitor them closely and watch for any signs of fatigue. Watch for changes in breathing, perspiration, clamminess, or fatigue. Look for weakness in either of the lower extremities. Give them an option to sit down before it becomes a problem. Introducing a functional task during standing will encourage a greater weight shift toward the weak side. Activities which are familiar and require weight shifts are the most beneficial. Patients will stand for longer periods of time during activities which are normally done in standing (for example, shaving).

